

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
GRINTON I. WILL LIBRARY
MAY 16, 2024

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Joseph Puglia Stephen Jannetti Patricia Phelan John Daily Jr. Ofunne Edoziem
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Shauna Porteus
BUSINESS MANAGER:	NONE
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Trustee Phelan
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUESTS:	Sharon DeYoung, Anthony Ortiz, Tara Somersall

The Board Meeting began at 7:00 pm.

President Maron opened the meeting by introducing Tara Somersall, Branch Administrator of Grinton I. Will Library and announcing that she was recently featured in the “Movers and Shakers” edition of *Library Journal*. Ms. Somersall was grateful for the recognition and thanked Director Montero and Assistant Director Porteus for their support.

Ms. Somersall then introduced two new staff members at Will Library: Sharon DeYoung, Children’s Librarian, and Anthony Ortiz, Custodial Worker. Both introduced themselves and said they have enjoyed working with the staff at Will and found everyone to be friendly and positive. The Board welcomed Ms. DeYoung and Mr. Ortiz.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of April 18, 2024.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero discussed Ms. Somersall's honor in more depth, explaining that the award goes to 40 librarians across the country every year in recognition of innovative and excellent library service. Ms. Somersall's profile highlighted her work with St. Joseph's Medical Center's Born to Read program, Summer Reading Buddies and local daycare centers while serving as Children's Department Head at Riverfront Library, as well as the successful opening of The Cove and Sensory Room at Riverfront.

Director Montero reported more staff news. Benedict Cosgrove, Riverfront Adult Librarian, was recently appointed full-time status on April 26 after serving in a part-time capacity for nearly a year. Mr. Cosgrove received his degree prior to his part-time appointment last year and also has 30 years of experience as a staff and freelance writer and editor. He expects Mr. Cosgrove to join the Board at the next meeting at Riverfront.

Director Montero announced that YPL won a PRxchange award on May 6. The PRxchange Awards recognize the best public relations produced by libraries; YPL was recognized in the advocacy, fundraising, annual reports and strategic plans category for its 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, "Inspiring Staff, Inspiring Spaces, Inspiring Yonkers". The award will be presented at the American Library Association (ALA) conference in June.

Director Montero reported the success of the Foundation for Yonkers Public Library's (FYPL) Annual Gala on April 25. The gala was held at Riverfront Library to honor author and journalist Mary Calvi and Riverfront Branch Administrator Sandy Amoyaw and was attended by many staff in support of Mr. Amoyaw. Director Montero thanked Supervisor of Custodians Russell Martinez and Mr. Ortiz for working with Sound Associates to produce the event.

Director Montero reported several art programs at YPL. All Yonkers libraries hosted key events for Yonkers Arts Weekend, including the Yonkers Public Schools (YPS) Student Art Expo at Riverfront; workshops on figurative wire sculptures, ceramics and flower arrangements; and performances by the Library Jazz Band, Emily Surtees, Emily Armstrong and Katori Walker. YPL also hosted the YPS Special Education Department's Artists with Autism Gala at Riverfront and opened the "Bridging Chasms" exhibition in the Riverfront Art Gallery, which features interfaith art by artists of several different faiths. Director Montero also reported that Westchester County Board of Legislators and ArtsWestchester invited YPL to apply for a \$10,500 legislative initiative funding grant and was optimistic of receiving the grant.

Director Montero reported on the Repair Cafe program at Crestwood Library in celebration of Earth Day and Earth Month. The program, which had over 90 people attend, encouraged people to repair, not replace, their devices and items. The program was supported by several local businesses like hardware stores and bicycle repair shops.

Assistant Director Porteus announced the formal opening of the Creative Studio at Will Library on April 23. The Creative Studio is a self-service podcast studio and do-it-yourself activity space that was informally opened in August to see how it would be utilized by the public. The formal opening on April 23 was a reintroduction of the space to the public that featured demonstrations on podcasting, VHS conversion, light boxes and ring-lights and

sewing; she added that several partnerships and programs have come out of the space already.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Neider had no report.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Phelan discussed a presentation she attended at the last WLS Board Meeting on outreach and how libraries are non-profit assets in the community and shared printed copies of the slideshow with trustees.

PERSONNEL REPORT

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointments:

Cosgrove, Benedict; Permanent Librarian I, \$65,366/yr, eff. 4/26/2024

Baird, Zahra; Permanent Librarian IV, \$107,588/yr, eff. 4/26/2024

Ospina, Amanda; Permanent Librarian I, \$64,209/yr, eff. 4/26/2024

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Buildings & Grounds - Daily (chair), Puglia

Trustee Daily reported that he has continued his research on the user experience at libraries and intends to conduct workshops to gather direct feedback. Director Montero commented that YPL conducted a site visit and patron survey with Stephen Winter Associates as part of the ongoing inclusive wayfinding project at Riverfront and would share the survey results with him and invite him to join them on any meetings before the final report is prepared.

Fundraising & Development - Jannetti (chair)

Foundation Update: President Maron reported that the FYPL Annual Gala was a great success that was well-attended by more than 170 patrons and was very pleased with the lively event. FYPL has also already begun planning on the next gala and announced that the date will be April 24, 2025. She also reported that the Foundation will sponsor and participate in Make Music Day on June 21 and was applying for a grant to fund additional programming at YPL for the city-wide event.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #863.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Director Montero updated the Board on YPL's budget request for FY25. The Mayor's Executive budget was released in April and included a 25% cut to Sunday service but was otherwise fully-funded. He was expecting a more difficult budget and was pleased that the only significant cut was a manageable one, as the library could absorb this by closing on Sundays in the summer and/or around holidays. He added that he, Assistant Director Porteus and Business Manager Presedo attended a City Council hearing on the proposed budget last Monday that went well and afforded them the opportunity to brief the Council on library service; the Council had questions about their capital budget and the status of the chiller at Will but otherwise was very complimentary of YPL.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE – Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 7:00pm at Riverfront Library.

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 7:47 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary